

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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Classification/Control Markings

This report contains unprocessed information. Plans and/or policies should not be evolved or modified solely on basis of this report.

NR-062-79

1. COUNTRY: ROMANIA (RO) 2. REPORT NUMBER: 2 218 4512 79

3. TITLE: Artillery Firing Procedures (C) 4. PROJECT NUMBER: 223308 (A)

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NUERNBERG, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

8. REFERENCES: U-GER-49545

9. ASSESSMENT: SOURCE F, INFO 6 10. ORIGINATOR: 18th MI Bn, 66th MI Gp IS (PRVO)
IAGPE-TB-P, APO NY 09108

11. REQUEST EVALUATION QPO 12. PREPARING OFFICER: *James D. Smith, Cu 2*

13. APPROVING AUTHORITY: *Charles F. Scanlon*

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Nuernberg JIC
18th MI Bn

15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

16. SUMMARY:

(U) Information in this report responds partially to paragraph 12a(7)(d) of cited reference.

(C) This report contains information on the procedures employed when moving an artillery battery into a firing position, dismounting, positioning the gun, and the functions of the various crew members.

D YES ☐

R NO ☒

C

17. SUBJECT AND AREA CODES: 331220,
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146

18. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR:

1- DIA (original)

2-USAREUR

1-USEUCOM

1-VII Corps

1-USATSA-E

1-66th MI Gp (TB-P)

1-INSCOM (IAFM-OPS-
HUC-C)

1-USDAO Bucharest

1-DIA (DB-1B1)

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20. ENCLOSURES:

MICROFICED BY RDS-3D2

21. This IR contains 10 pages.

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22. DETAILS

A. (C) REPORT1. (C) Introduction

Information in this report was provided by a Source who acted as a crew chief of a 152-mm gun section in an Unidentified Artillery Brigade located in BIRLAD (4614N-2740E) (NM5119). He received his training in this unit and later became crew chief of the 2d Section, 1st Platoon, 8th Battery, 2d Battalion, of the U/I Artillery Brigade. The U/I Artillery Brigade had the military unit number UM 01458.

2. (C) 152-mm Gun Crew Functions

The crew of a 152-mm gun section consisted of 8 men; the crew chief and 7 crew members. The individual members of the gun sections had the following functions:

a. Crew Chief: He received firing data from the platoon leader or platoon sergeant and passed them on to the crew. He was required to write down, on a tablet which was suspended from his neck, all firing orders issued by the platoon leader or platoon sergeant. He was also responsible for monitoring the actions of the seven crew members to insure that they completed their functions properly. He also served as a reserve person should any one of the crew members become disabled.

b. Crewmember Nr. 1: Gunner.

This member operated the sighting mechanism and the elevation adjustment of the gun. Firing data received from the crew chief, he set on the sight mechanism when firing indirect-fire, and he sighted the sighting mechanism on the target when firing direct-fire. After setting the sighting mechanism he would adjust the gun elevation. He also functioned as the assistant crew chief.

c. Crewmember Nr. 2: Assistant Gunner

This member operated the traverse of the gun. After the gunner had set the firing data on the sighting mechanism he would turn the traverse wheel until the moving arrow was even with the stationary arrow.

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d. Crewmember Nr. 3: Loader

This member insured that the projectile was loaded properly, closed the breech and fired the gun.

e. Crewmember Nr. 4: Assistant Loader

This member was handed the projectile from crewmember Nr. 5, checked the fuse setting, verified the setting with the crew chief, and then handed the projectile to the loader.

f. Crewmember Nr. 5: Ammo Handler

This crewmember received the projectile from crewmember Nr. 6, set the fuse by means of a specially shaped wrench, and passed the projectile on to the assistant loader.

g. Crewmember Nr. 6: Ammo Handler

This crewmember received the projectile from crewmember Nr. 7, screwed on the fuse, and passed the projectile on to the crewmember Nr. 5.

h. Crewmember Nr. 7: Ammo Handler

This crewmember unpacked the projectile from its crate and passed it on to crewmember Nr. 6.

The seven crewmembers were referred to by their respective number and not by title.

3. (C) Crewmember Positions (Figure 1)

- a. Crewmember Nr 1: To the immediate left of the gun breech
- b. Crewmember Nr 2: To the immediate right of the gun breech
- c. Crewmember Nr 3: Behind the gun breech
- d. Crewmember Nr 4: Approximately 1 m behind crewmember Nr 3
- e. Crewmember Nr 5: Approximately 1 m behind crewmember Nr 4
- f. Crewmember Nr 6: Approximately 1 m behind and 1 m to the right of crewmember 5.

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g. Crewmember Nr 7: Approximately 1 m to the right of crewmember Nr 6.

h. Crew Chief: Approximately 1 m to the rear and 1 m to the left of crewmember Nr 5.

4. (C) Crew Seating Arrangement on Prime Mover

The crew entered (mounted) the prime mover in numerical sequence beginning with crewmember Nr 1 and the crew chief entering last. Dis-mounting was in reverse order. The entire crew rode in the back, passenger area, of the prime mover (AT-L).

5. (C) Road March Formation

The 152-mm gun-howitzers were towed by tracked AT-L prime movers. The four guns of each battery were lined up so that the 1st firing section followed the truck carrying the battery commander, senior sergeant, forward observers and telephone operators. The remaining three guns followed in-line behind. The only travel formation known to Source was a closed formation. The drivers were required to keep visual contact of the vehicle in front of them and an average distance of approximately 50 m. Source referred to this formation as a "closed column" (Geschlossene Kolonne). He had never heard of "open column". The platoon leader rode in the cab of the 1st gun section, whereas the platoon sergeant rode in the cab of the 3d gun section (1st gun section of the 2d platoon).

6. (C) Setting up for Firing Position

Setting the gun up into a firing position, not to include laying of the gun, normally took 2 minutes. The following sequence was followed:

a. Platoon leader or platoon sergeant pointed out position and general direction for the gun.

b. The gun was unhooked from the prime mover

c. The canvas cover was removed

d. The tube of the gun was extended. If the tube was properly greased it could be pulled out by hand, if not, a rope was attached and several crewmembers pulled it out. The latter method prolonged the time it normally took to set up the gun.

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e. The front wheel assembly of the carriage was uncoupled by pulling out a retainer pin, lifting the trail. The front wheel assembly was placed approximately 7 m to the right of the gun position.

f. The spades on the trail were folded down.

g. The trails were spread out and the rough positioning corrections made at this time.

h. The sighting mechanism was mounted on the gun.

i. The platoon leader or platoon sergeant assisted the gunner in laying the gun after having emplaced the aiming stakes.

j. While the gun was being laid the ammo handlers unloaded the ammunition boxes from the prime mover.

k. The prime mover moved to a position approximately 300 m from the gun position to available natural cover if possible.

7. (C) Laying the Battery

Source could not provide any information on how the battery was laid, except that this information was provided by the platoon leader or platoon sergeant. Usually all four gun sections of the battery were positioned in a straight line. The times, when the positions deviated from this pattern revealed no specific arrangement. Normally, the guns were positioned in a straight line, each gun approximately 10 to 15 m from the next.

8. (C) Camouflage

Each gun section carried a net which measured approximately 7 m square. The net consisted of a fiber material woven into a square mesh. This net was erected on poles with approximately 1 m clearance above the gun. Vegetation or grass from the surrounding area was laced into the mesh of the net.

9. (C) Command and Support Elements

a. Command

The platoon leader received his instructions from the battery

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<p>commander. During direct-fire exercises the battery commander was located with the gun sections. He was always accompanied by a telephone operator. During indirect-fire exercises the battery commander was not with the gun sections and Source assumed that he was located forward of the gun positions. The platoon leader had a telephone operator with him at all times.</p> <p>b. <u>Support</u></p> <p>The forward observers each were accompanied by a telephone operator. During direct-fire exercises the forward observers were not present. The drivers left with their prime movers after dropping off the gun. Source had no knowledge what their function was after they left the gun positions except that he heard that they remain with their vehicles in concealment. Resupply of ammunition, when applicable, was brought by the battery headquarters truck in which the battery commander rode during convoy movement.</p> <p>10. (C) <u>Fire Commands</u></p> <p>There were three types of fire commands given. The platoon leader and/or the platoon sergeant would give one of the following commands:</p> <p>a. Salve - which meant all four guns would fire.</p> <p>In this case all four guns would fire on the command of the platoon leader and/or platoon sergeant.</p> <p>b. Fire order for specific gun. He would call out "1st", "2d", "3d" and/or "4th" gun or any combination up to as many as three guns.</p> <p>c. Battery or platoon firing at timed intervals. He would state two or four guns and the number of rounds to be fired in what time intervals. "First platoon, four rounds, at infantry target, at 30-second intervals!". When the guns were ready to fire he would give the first fire command; thereafter the crew chiefs would give the following fire commands according to the time intervals prescribed.</p> <p>When firing to the command of the platoon leader or platoon sergeant he would raise his right arm. When he dropped his arm the guns would be fired. Depending on the number of rounds he would raise and lower his arms for each further fire command. When firing individual guns he would</p>		(Leave Blank)
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provide the target data, number of rounds, type of target but the crew chief would give the fire command. On direct-fire targets the gunner would give the fire commands.

11. (C) Fire Settings

The ammunition used by Source during his time with the artillery unit had three possible fuze settings. Source also knew of armor piercing ammunition, however, it was never used and he was only familiar with it in theory. The ammunition used had the following settings for the fuzes:

- a. Detonation on contact which was used against infantry targets.
- b. Delayed-action of 2 or 3 seconds which was used against structural targets such as buildings, concrete or wood bunkers.
- c. Delayed-action fuze of 5 to 6 seconds which was used against underground or revetted targets.

12. (C) Miscellaneous

- a. Maximum range for direct-fire targets: 5000 meters
- b. Maximum range for indirect-fire targets: 12000 meters
- c. Traverse: 30 degrees
- d. Rate of fire: Four rounds per minute maximum
- e. Gun security: None, except crew itself.
- f. Projectile weight: 45 kg

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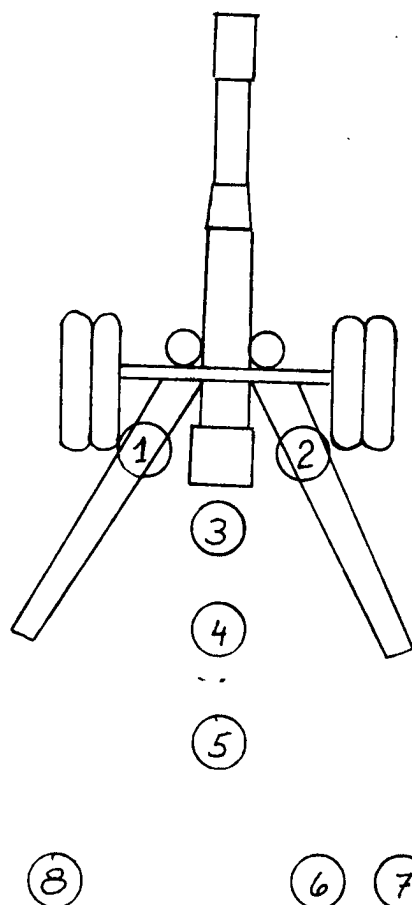


Figure 1: (C) Memory Sketch of Crew Positions on 152-mm M1937/43 (ML-20) Gun.

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<p>(C) <u>Legend to Figure 1:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crewmember Nr. 1: Operates sight mechanism and sets traverse (Gunner) 2. Crewmember Nr. 2: Sets gun elevations (Assistant Gunner) 3. Crewmember Nr. 3: Closes breech and fires gun (Loader) 4. Crewmember Nr. 4: Loads projectile into gun (Assistant Loader) 5. Crewmember Nr. 5: Sets fuse on projectile (Ammo handler) 6. Crewmember Nr. 6: Mounts fuse on projectile (Ammo handler) 7. Crewmember Nr. 7: Unpacks projectile (Ammo handler) 8. Crew chief 		(Leave Blank)
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B. (C) ORIGINATOR'S COMMENTS1. (C) Source Data

Source, [] was a 25 year old ethnic German from ROMANIA. He completed 8 years of elementary school and 3 years of trade school. He was a lathe operator by profession and was employed by a construction company, "ICMJ MEDIAS" in the city of MEDIAS, Romania from 1973 until 1974. Thereafter, from October 1974 until February 1976, he served his obligatory military service with an U/I artillery brigade in BIRLAD. He attained the rank of corporal and was a crew chief of a gun crew on a 152-mm M1937/43 (ML-20) gun section. From March 1976 until April 1979 he was reemployed by ICMJ MEDIAS as a lathe operator of the truck repair shop. On 26 Apr 79 he entered the FRG legally to reunite with his family.

2. (C) Interrogator's Remarks

Source was of average intelligence. He was extremely afraid of reprisals against his mother who is still in ROMANIA. He cooperated to the extent that he answered prepared questions with the shortest possible answer. He did not volunteer any information and it is felt that he has much more and more detailed information. He plans to have his mother join him in the FRG as soon as possible. Thereafter he could possibly be more cooperative. Even though much of the information is sketchy and fragmented it is believed to be credible since Source did not contradict himself. He claimed he could not orient himself on maps, thus locations provided are approximates determined on oral descriptions of locations. Furthermore, Source was not willing or capable of producing memory sketches, nor could he provide an oral description which would have allowed the interrogator to prepare such.

3. (C) Other Reports

NR-060-79 MEDIAS, Military Installation, Pilot Training School
2 218 9697 79 MEDIAS-BRASOV, Electrification of RR Line
2 218 9698 79 MEDIAS, Patriotic Guard
Nr-061-79 BIRLAD, OB, Unidentified Artillery Brigade
NR-063-79 Artillery Equipment RR Loading Procedures
NR-064-79 CINCUC; Indirect-Fire Exercise
NR-065-79 GALATI, Direct-Fire Exercise

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